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CENSUS DELIVERS OPPORTUNITY TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE 2007 Census of Agriculture to Arrive in Mailboxes Across America

Little Rock, Arkansas – It's not every day that a walk to your mailbox leads to an opportunity to shape the future of the agricultural industry. But for farmers across Arkansas, that opportunity soon will become a reality. The 2007 Census of Agriculture, the only source of consistent and comprehensive agricultural data for every state and county in the nation, is currently being mailed to farmers across the United States.

Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the Census provides detailed data covering nearly every facet of U.S. agriculture. Government organizations, lawmakers, town planners and individual farm operations can use this vital information to help them plan for future facilities, services and community growth.

"The 2007 Census of Agriculture provides farmers with a powerful voice. The information gathered through the Census influences policy decisions that can have a tremendous impact on farmers and their communities," said Becky Cross, director of the NASS Arkansas Field Office. "I strongly encourage all farmers in Arkansas to promptly complete and return the Census, so they can voice to the nation the value and importance of agriculture."

Cross added that in addition to affecting policy decisions, Census information also influences community growth. Many companies review Census data when determining where to establish their businesses, which further emphasizes the importance of supplying accurate information.

"The 2007 Census of Agriculture is an opportunity to shape the future of the agricultural industry and rural communities for years to come," said Cross. "Every producer, no matter how big or small the operation, should take advantage of that opportunity."

Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008. Producers can return their forms by mail or, for the first time, they have the convenient option of filling out the Census online. For more information about the Census, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call toll-free (888) 4AG-STAT or (888) 424-7828. The Census is your voice, your future, and your responsibility.

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